

**From:** Mary\_Paul\_Stewart@berlex.com@inetgw  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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Your Honor,

I know there is a deadline for comments and I am not the most eloquent arguer on short notice, but here are some of the reasons I feel Microsoft must be severely punished.

Microsoft is not a company we can trust with our technological future. They have a history of "thumbing their nose" at the legal system through an expert legal team of "loophole finders."

Netscape was only one in a long line of Microsoft casualties. Remember when Lotus 1-2-3 and Word Perfect were king?

What Microsoft is good, perhaps even "innovative" at: bundling their products for competitive advantage, giving them away, either for free or a ridiculously low price, then once the competition is gone, and/or their stranglehold on the market is secure, they charge customers hideous prices for marginal upgrades. (Mostly over-rated "bug fixes".) Several years back, Microsoft shrewdly invited everyone with pirated copies of their various office product to become "legal" through a free registration. The amnesty plan worked, and the now legal owners, feeling they had "one up on Microsoft" happily paid for the never-ending upgrades.

In general however, Microsoft is most definitely NOT a technologically innovative company. With few exceptions, (the "talking paper clip" for one) their announced "innovations" are directly copied from others. For specific examples, see <http://www.vcnet.com/bms/departments/innovation.shtml>. Bill Gates, often cited as some "genius" rather than the megalomaniac that he is, did not even see the relevance of the internet until he saw Netscape's market penetration.

I personally recall purchasing a Netscape browser upgrade several years ago. (My first copy was in my starter kit when I joined Earthlink--and I assume Earthlink paid a license for the privilege of distributing the browser, as it was not free at the time.) Once Microsoft "woke up and smelled the internet" they began giving Internet Explorer away to eat away at Netscape's market share. The effect was immediate, and Netscape had no choice but to follow suit. I would also add that at the time Microsoft began giving away their browser, Netscape had the technologically superior product, which had already incorporated the ability to handle javascripts. At the time Microsoft made their infamous deal with AOL, Internet Explorer still did not handle javascripts, which is one of the reasons people used to hate browsing through AOL. I also recall how I complained to AOL about their tactics--they would "nag" me at log-on and log-off to download the IE

browser--obviously part of the contract.

But that wasn't enough for Microsoft. Their version of innovation was to force Netscape and every other browser into obsolescence by "welding" Internet Explorer into the Windows operating system so that it cannot be deleted. While I'm sure that there are many in the pro-Microsoft camp that will give very impressive reasons for why this is necessary and innovative--- I don't believe a single one. I consider myself to be a fairly savvy computer user, versed in both PC and Mac platforms, but I have yet to find a single benefit to the consumer that was created by tying these two products together. To be specific, I cannot see any difference in functionality between the bundled Internet Explorer on the Windows computer I use at work versus running Internet Explorer on the Mac I use at work for graphic development. Both programs work as they are supposed to, opening HTML pages and connecting me to the internet. There is only one reason that Microsoft bundled these products...to wipe out Netscape and dominate the internet.

And what will Microsoft gain? Well, look at where they are focusing their energy today. Now they are forcing anyone who buys their recent upgrade packages to apply for their internet "Passport" account. \$400 Rebates/incentives are driving consumers to sign up for MSN as Microsoft takes aim at AOL's market domination. Microsoft has one aim, to control every exchange of personal, consumer, and financial information.

Since I have watched a never-ending stream of examples of unethical and anticompetitive behavior from this company, I can say this without reservation: This is not the company I want peeking into my wallet and tracking my visits on the internet. This company is Big Brother incarnate.

Respectfully yours,  
Mary L. Paul Stewart